Amendments to Claims

Claim 1(Canceled).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended). A method for increasing the resistance of a host cell to aromatic carboxylic acids comprising:

a) providing a host cell which comprises at least one *E. coli yhcQ* gene as set forth in SEQ ID NO:2 and at least one *E. coli yhcP* gene as set forth in SEQ ID NO:1; and

b) up-regulating the expression of the at least one *E. coli yhcQ* gene and the at least one *E. coli yhcP* gene whereby the host cell resistance to aromatic carboxylic acids is increased.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 2 wherein the at least one *yhcQ* gene and the at least one *yhcP* gene are endogenous to said host cell.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 2 wherein the at least one *yhcQ* gene and the at least one *yhcP* gene are heterologous to said host cell.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 2 wherein the host cell is selected from the group consisting of bacteria, yeast, fungi and plants.

Claim 6 (Original). A method according to Claim 5 wherein the host cell is an enteric bacteria.

Claim 7 (Original). A method according to claim 5 wherein the host cell is selected from the group of genera consisting of *Escherichia*, *Salmonella*, *Bacillus*, *Acinetobacter*, *Streptomyces*, *Methylobacter*, *Rhodococcus*, *Corynebacterium, Pseudomonas*, *Rhodobacter*, and *Synechocystis.*

Claim 8 (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 2 wherein the aromatic carboxylic acid is selected from the group consisting of of para-hydroxybenzoic acid, para-hydroxycinnamic acid, cinnamic acid, salicylic acid, benzoic acid, and 1-napthoic acid.

Claim 9 -10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 2 wherein the at least one *yhcQ* gene and the at least one *yhcP* gene are expressed on a multicopy plasmid.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 2 wherein the at least one *yhcQ* gene and the at least one *yhcP* gene are under the control of a strong promoter selected from the group consisting of *lac, trp,* lP_L, lP_R, *T7, tac,* and *trc*.

Claim 13-14 Canceled).